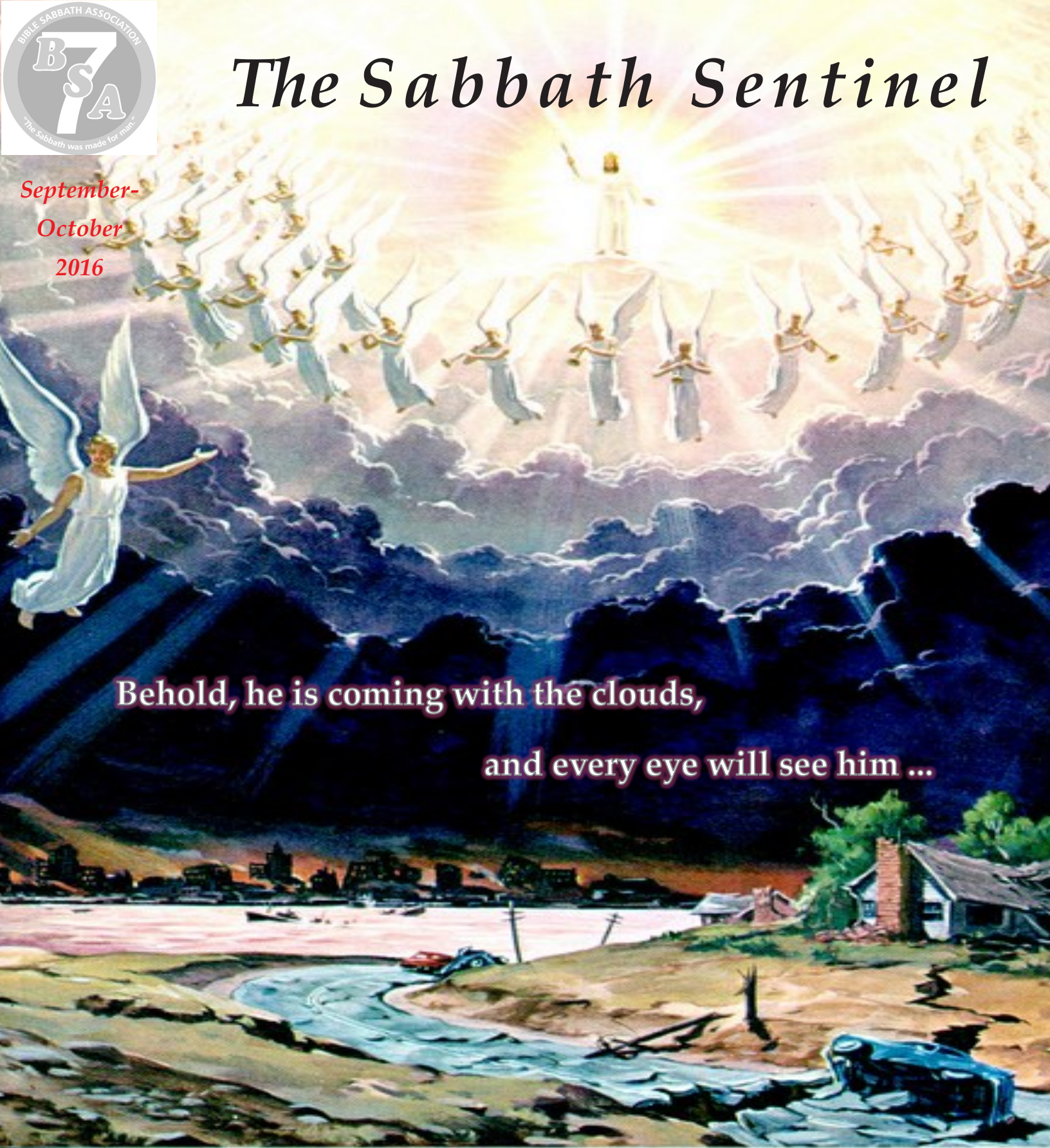




The Sabbath Sentinel

*September-
October
2016*



*Behold, he is coming with the clouds,
and every eye will see him ...*

BSA—The Bible Sabbath Association

Jesus said, "They worship me in vain teaching as doctrine the commandments of men."

The Sabbath Sentinel September-October 2016

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Can We Still See It?

Our front cover this issue features an artistic rendition of the return of Christ to earth. Scripture reminds us that we need to have a vision of our goal kept firmly before our eyes lest we fall short of reaching that goal. Indeed, we are reminded that without God's vision we are at risk of perishing.

In line with having that forward-looking vision, it is wise to look into our spiritual mirrors to be reminded of the people that we once were. Some confuse the words of Jesus found in Luke 9:62 where we are admonished that, once putting our hand to God's plow, we should not look back. This admonition refers to first attending to the affairs of this world before following Christ. Above all other things, we need to be following Christ and all that such entails.

My thought is to heed the warning of James 1:23-24 which is that we should not forget what manner of men and women that we once were. This is not to say that we should wallow in self-recrimination. We shouldn't. The sacrifice of God's only-begotten Son was more than enough payment for all of our sins of which we have repented and asked for forgiveness. That is either truth, or the God who created all things great and small would find it expedient to lie to us; He doesn't and He plainly says so.

What James is saying to us is that we ought to remember how we were because in the remembering comes the vision of our new destination. We don't need to continue to repent of those things except as we find ourselves falling victim to that dead man's vices once again; they are to be forgotten! Instead we remember because with remembrance comes thankfulness that we don't get the reward that we so richly deserved for our sins. This is a promise from the God who has created everything that we can see—and can't see!

Beyond that, James' admonition provides a platform for hope that we can use for the purpose of helping others. That is to say, our vision of the mercy we have been provided can give rise to hope for others who have similar obstacles to overcome.

I don't know if people realize this or not, but there are people walking this earth in the depths of despair thinking that their sins are so bad that not even God can forgive them. It does not matter to them that Paul murdered the Church brethren. It does not matter to them that David, a man after God's own heart, was not only guilty of murder but of doing so to cover up an adulterous affair

with the man's wife. Yet, we know that these men were rescued by God and are, not to mention were, powerful witnesses for the Way of God!

There are people around who are so steeped in guilt that they can't see the blessed mercy that is part of what it is that God is doing with all of us. Is it any wonder why we see as many suicides as we do in the United States, arguably the most blessed country on Earth?

We know that the return of the Christ heralds a time when death and sorrow will begin to be put away, chained with the Evil One to a destiny of eternal destruction. It is that vision held firmly that gives us the hope to go on when we see all of the madness around us, madness that grows progressively more prevalent as we cascade dizzily toward that prophesied crash at the end.

Yes, things are going to get bad, and bad in a way that we have never seen on this planet. That is saying much considering this present elder generation has seen the likes of Adolph Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Paul Pot, and the veritable plethora of child murderers that have been discovered in this generation's lifetimes. Some among us will probably live to see that time of unimaginable horror.

But, if we are holding fast the vision of our King and Lord returning to stop the madness, our fear of that future madness should wane, giving way to hope.

In light of that, we are starting a new set of articles written by you, the readers, in which you will tell us how you came to know about the Law of God and to be convicted that you need to keep God's Commandments, including His Sabbath days. We will be publishing those short articles as an encouragement to many brethren and potential brethren who will read them. However, we hope in encouraging you to see the Hand of God in your calling that you will likewise rekindle the fire of the vision that keeps your eyes focused on the same place Abraham focused—on a city whose foundations were built by God, a city made for all of His Children, where there is no more sorrow, no more death, only eternal life in service to the rest of the forgiven Children of God, Almighty.

—Editor



Revisiting the Ancient Landmarks

There is a pattern in the Bible of successive generations going back to visit the established

landmarks of their forefathers. Abraham dug wells, and later his son Isaac re-visited those same wells (Gen. 26:15-18). Beersheba was a specific location established by Abraham, but visited by both Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 21:22-31, 26:23, 46:5). As believers who also observe the Sabbath on the seventh day, it is important for us to remember where we have come from.

On June 13, 2016, I had the opportunity to sit down with Rob Appel, executive director of the Seventh Day Baptist Conference (Henceforth SDBC). In our meeting, we discussed the present state of the SDBC and the Sabbath community at large. I shared some ways that the BSA would like to help promote the vision and purpose of the SDBC. The meeting went great, and we shared many views. I found Rob to be very focused in his service to God and also very future-directed, which I believe to be extremely important. As believers, we must focus on right now, but we cannot forget to plan for the future.

Many people may not know this, but the SDBC is really the mother church for most Sabbath observers in North America. It is an ancient landmark of a truth we all hold very dear: the seventh-day Sabbath. The word ancient in this article does not mean outdated; it simply means long-standing, as the SDBC is a long-standing group that still exists today.

I believe it is very important for us as Christians to know history. Understanding history gives us a greater appreciation for where we have been and where we are now. Many people may not know this, but the BSA was founded by SDBC members George and Mabel Main, in

the year 1945. Originally, they were headquartered out of Pomona Park, FL. I would like to share with you some history of this important group of believers and the powerful impact they have had on Sabbath-observers today.



The origins of the SDBC start in England around 1650 with writers such as John Ockford, who wrote *The Doctrine of the Fourth Commandment*. Other defenders of the Sabbath at this time include, but are not limited to, William Saller, Thomas Tillam, and Peter Chamberlen. At this time, churches were formed that practiced the seventh day Sabbath.

Steven Mumford, who belonged to the Tewkesbury Baptist Church in England, came to America around 1664. In 1671, he founded the first SDB church in America. It should be noted that though the SDB churches were separate institutions, they still promoted fellowship with other Baptist churches in the colonies. More SDB churches were started as time went on.

By the end of the 1700s, there were SDB churches in areas such as Western Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The General Conference of the SDB church was formed in 1802. Their present publication, the *Sabbath Recorder*, was first printed in June 1844. They continued to spread the gospel message across the United States and even evangelize in other parts of the world.

As aforementioned, the SDB group has had a tremendous impact on Sabbath groups in America. In the 1800s, a man name William Miller believed that he received a mandate from God to prepare people for the return of the Lord. He believed that the Lord's return would occur in 1843 or 1844. He began a movement that would become known as the Millerite or Adventist movement. People from different denominations might be called Millerites or Adventists, whether they were Methodist, Episcopalian, or from another church. Miller set the final calculation for the Lord's return to be October 22nd, 1844 (which was on the festival of Atonement). As we know, the Lord did not return during this time. This became known as the "Great Disappointment."

In the spring of 1844, a woman named Rachel Oakes Preston convinced a Methodist Adventist named Frederick Wheeler to believe in the Sabbath. Over time, Frederick Wheeler shared the Sabbath with other believers with Adventist views. Eventually, two organizations were formed: The Seventh-Day Adventist Church (SDA) and the Church of God Seventh Day (CG7).

In the 1920s, a man named Herbert W. Armstrong was converted and joined the CG7 church. Due to doctrinal disputes, he later left and started a group which would later become known as the World Wide Church of God (WWCG). From this group came many other groups which believe very similarly, and typically have the phrase "Church of God" associated with their name.

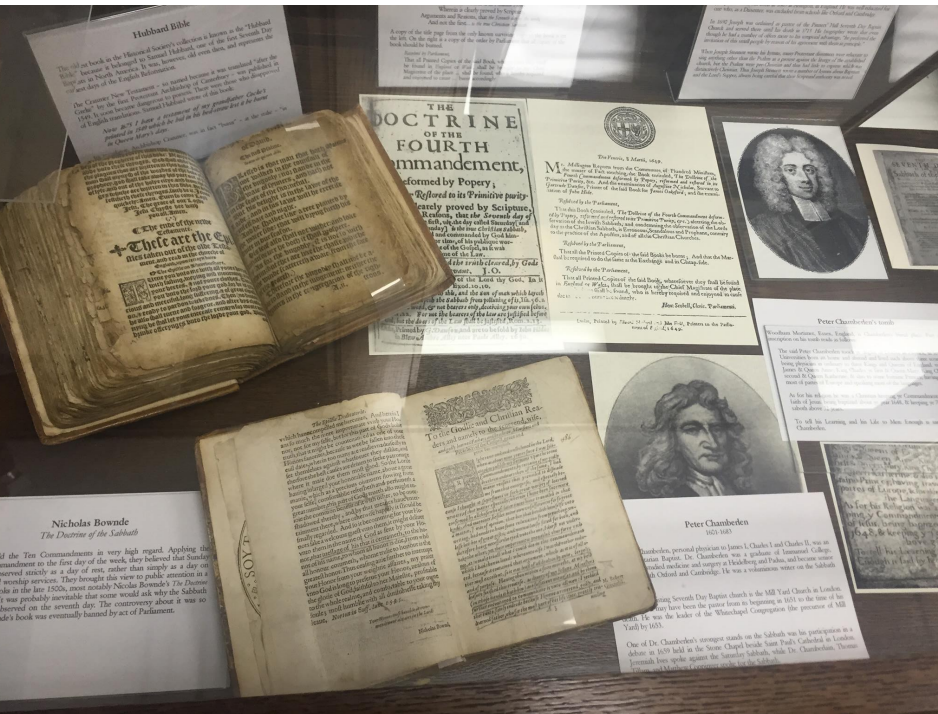
In American history, pioneers were those who cleared paths in the wilderness and established trade routes in difficult to access locations. Pioneers made the way easier for those who came behind them. There is a spiritual parallel to this historical example. We can see from the overview of history above that the pioneers of Sabbath-keeping in America come from the SDB. It is important that we never lose sight of that or neglect it. They paved

the way for other groups to grow and flourish. Look at how many groups came because of their efforts. They have made the way easier for us today and even founded the BSA.

We encourage each of you to pray for our SDBC brethren and their needs. They are still an active and growing group! We owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude and the BSA is very thankful for the opportunity to serve them.

All historical information about the SDB was taken from Don Sanford's "A Choosing People: The history of the Seventh Day Baptists", 2nd ed. This book is now available to be ordered through the BSA.

All historical information about the CG7 was taken from Robert Coulter's *The Journey: A History of the Church of God (Seventh Day)*.



How My Family Found Out About the Sabbath

Kelly Vonner

In the fall of 2008, my husband and I were active members at a small COGIC (Church of God in Christ) congregation in Clarendon, Texas named True. At the time, my husband was the assistant coach at the local junior college, and I worked as a high school math teacher in the neighboring town of Memphis, Texas. We thought we had our lives planned out. My husband aspired to be an NCAA Division I Head Coach, and I knew I could teach math anywhere. Needless to say, God had other plans.

My husband's basketball team experienced the worst season ever, and Jeremy found himself spending more time at home. One day in prayer he asked to Lord to reveal His truth to him. I didn't know about his request at the time, but the Lord had prompted me to create a prayer wall for our home. Within a few weeks, Jeremy had added his request for truth to the prayer wall along with request for our eyes to be opened.

One night he revealed his struggle to understand the scriptures in the Bible. We prayed, we cried and we prayed some more. Our pursuit intensified that night. Within days we discovered God's Learning Channel (GLC) on television, and Jeremy dove head-first into the Book of Jeremiah. At the time God's Learning Channel was a network that was committed to sharing the truth of God's Word. It was this network that opened our eyes to the Sabbath. We would watch shows that featured Brad Scott, Bill Cloud, Dr. William McDonald, Tony Robinson, Avi Ben Mordechai, Uri Harel, Dr. Brad Young, and Jay Swallow. Jeremy would study all day. I was amazed at the zeal and fire that began to exude from his spirit.

During this time, we were still very active with our church. We would set apart Friday sundown to Saturday sundown, but still attend services on Sunday. Jeremy was ready to stop attending altogether, but I encouraged him to speak with our pastor and see his point of view. Jeremy had decided that we would speak with our pastor on the next Wednesday night Bible Study. Coincidentally, the title of the lesson was *Choosing God or man*. The pastor couldn't understand or grasp what we

were trying to say, but by the end of church on Sunday, I knew that it was time to move on. Jeremy had one more conversation with our pastor that ended with the Pastor asking Jeremy why he couldn't just accept the good with the bad. At that moment the line had been drawn and we had chosen as a family to stand on the side of truth.

I praise God for my husband; he yielded to the voice of the Lord and ushered his family into a way of life that has brought liberty, understanding, light and truth into our realm. It has not been easy, but living this truth becomes more and more precious every Friday at sunset. The Sabbath, the day my God sanctified and blessed is weekly being etched into my heart and mind as peace and joy personified. The Sabbath, the day my God rested from His work, leaves me refreshed, whole, and rejuvenated. His rest is my rest. His yoke is upon me, and His burden is light. The Sabbath reminds me that it is my duty and my reasonable service to honor and obey my King. It is in our obedience that we truly display a boldness for Him; therefore, I rest in Him on the Sabbath.

Kelly Vonner and her family have been members of Hungry Hearts Ministries, a Christian Sabbath congregation in Jackson, TN, since September of 2009. She has married to Elder Jeremy Vonner since 2006, and they have three sons--Jeremiah, Joshua, and Josiah. Kelly is currently the assistant principal at a rural middle school in West Tennessee and co-founder of the Boys-to-Men mentoring program. Kelly travels with her husband and sons across the southeast to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are taking a cue from Ms. Vonner for future editions. We have found it interesting to read about how people have come to know and love God's way of life and how He brought them out of the world.

If you have a story of your own to tell, please feel free to send it to the Editor of The Sabbath Sentinel. Those email stories should be typed into an email or a text document that can be emailed to royce.mitchell@rocketmail.com. We hope to be able to read and share your story soon!



THE WAR PRIEST

R. Herbert

Although many Christians have never heard of the biblical “War Priest,” a study of the concept is worthwhile as it can help us more fully understand the roles of the One who became the promised Messiah. In the Bible, this role is only mentioned once specifically, and then only briefly, in Deuteronomy 20:1-3:

“When you go to war against your enemies ... do not be afraid of them, because the Lord your God, who brought you up out of Egypt, will be with you. When you are about to go into battle, the priest shall come forward and address the army. He shall say: “Hear, Israel: Today you are going into battle against your enemies. Do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not panic or be terrified by them.”

It is easy to assume, reading these verses, that “the priest” is the High Priest who officiated in the Tabernacle or Temple, but Jewish commentary and tradition as found recorded in the tractates of the Talmud unanimously state that this priest was, in fact, a “Second High Priest” who was called the “Priest Anointed for War” (Tractate Sotah 8:1). Deuteronomy itself gives us little information, but it would appear that the priest was someone who would have been present with the army, as the text does not say the priest “shall come and address the army” but that he would “come forward” – the Hebrew signifying coming from among the army rather than to it. This would perhaps indicate, as tradition affirms, that before battles the War Priest was responsible for preparing the warriors, making sure they were fit for battle and rejecting any he felt were unfit for the fight.

Bringing together what information we can from Jewish tradition, we find that this priest was apparently specially anointed for his position and role. According to the Talmud, the High Priest serving in the Temple was of the highest rank, but the role of the War Priest was of greater significance than that of the “Deputy High Priest” (Tractate Nazir 47b) – hence the naming of the War Priest as the “Second High Priest.”

The first War Priest mentioned in the Old Testament was apparently Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron (Exodus 6:25), who personally executed an Israelite man and a Midianite woman for their immorality and so ended a plague sent to punish the Israelites for their sin in regard to prohibited relations with Midian (Numbers 25:1-9). Phinehas served as War Priest according to the Talmud (Tractate Sotah 43a), as we see in Numbers 31:6: “Moses sent them into battle, a thousand from each tribe, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, who took with him articles from the sanctuary and the trumpets for signaling.” His role as War Priest is made even more explicit in the later Jewish commentary Midrash Rabbah which states of Elisheba the wife of Aaron (Exodus 6:23) that “... her husband was High Priest, her two sons were both Deputy High Priests, Phinehas her grandson was a Priest Anointed for War.”

As an anointed priest, the War Priest was a type of “messiah” (anointed), and elsewhere in Midrash Rabbah the War Priest is called the “War Messiah.” In fact, the Midrash contains an interesting tradition that the “four craftsmen” of Zechariah 1:20 were to be equated with Elijah, the Messiah, Melchizedek, and the War Messiah (Midrash Rabbah - Song of Songs 2:8-13). This is interesting because in the New Testament, Elijah and Melchizedek are both clearly linked to the Messiah, and the inclusion of the War Messiah in the same group leads us to consider that individual in terms of one of the messianic roles of Christ.

For the most part, the New Testament stresses the priestly role of Christ as an atoning one parallel to the work of the Temple High Priest – as in the detailed analogy given in the Book of Hebrews (Hebrews 5, 7-10), of course. But although it does not draw the comparison directly, the New Testament also shows Christ fulfilling a separate priestly role – more like that of the War Priest – at his return. Usually we think of the Messiah’s return as being that of a king, which it is, of course, yet we should also consider the language of the Book of Revelation: “I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white

horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war" (Revelation 19:11) which is largely reflective of scriptures such as Isaiah 59:17 where: "He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance, and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak" – in which the comparison is often not primarily one of kingship, but of judgment and war.

Ultimately, the concept of the War Priest and the symbolic linking of his role to the Messiah are post-biblical and speculative. Yet some of the traditions seem to be ancient ones. Judas Maccabaeus, who led the Jewish Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire (167–160 BCE), is said to have done what the War Priest was to do (1 Maccabees 3:56), and it is interesting that of all the priests, only the High Priest and the War Priest are said to have been personally anointed – and thus could be said to be parallels of the Anointed One, the promised Messiah.

While every King, High Priest and "Priest Anointed for War" was individually anointed, according to Exodus the sons of Aaron, representing the whole group of regular priests, only received a semi-anointing or sprinkling (*nazah*) after the service of consecration (Exodus 29:21). This "sprinkling" was apparently not repeated and is said to have been for the group for posterity (Exodus 40:15 – where the forms of the word *masha* mean only that the priests received oil and do not confirm the manner in which it was applied). Interestingly, this kind of situation was found in other nations of the ancient Near East and is seen in the Amarna Letters (51:4–9), where an individual proclaims his authority based on his grandfather's anointing.

But whether tradition is correct in claiming a distinct office for the "War Priest" or not, it is clear that while the Messiah fulfilled the role of the Temple High Priest at His first coming, at His second coming His preeminent role will be not one of atonement, but of war. In that sense, the second coming of the Messiah will certainly be parallel to the role understood to have been that of the priest called the "War Messiah," the "Priest Anointed for War."

R. Herbert (a pen name) holds a Ph.D. in biblical and ancient Near Eastern languages, archaeology, and culture. He writes for a number of Christian venues as well as for his websites at LivingWithFaith.org and TacticalChristianity.org where you can find many of his other articles and free eBooks.



Discovering the Lost Sabbath Truth

by Steve Wohlberg.

Beginning in Genesis, through the Ten Commandments and Jesus' example, the brief pages of this pocketbook declares the veracity of the Sabbath. In *Discovering the Lost Sabbath Truth*, the murkiness gives way to the facts of human tradition and the church history of how leaders attempted to change God's law to fit their own way of thinking. The author parallels Christ's Sabbath rest once He finished the creation of this world to His Sabbath rest when He concluded His earthly work of salvation. Even in death, He rested on the Sabbath day. Since the Garden of Eden, man has wanted things his way. From the cross, Jesus pleaded with us to choose Him and His day.

P205 \$1.00

Feast of Tabernacles:

Glimpse the World Under Christ's Reign!

Bob Thiel, Ph.D. scriptures:

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures a culminating event in God's plan. After Jesus died for our sins to redeem humankind, and after He sent us the Holy Spirit and picked out a people for His Name to become kings and priests to reign with Him on earth (Revelation 5:10), and after His Second Coming, and after He has finally placed all the sins upon the head of Satan separating both him and the sins from the presence of God and His people (making us finally joined at-one with Him, atonement), then we are ready for that final series of events, the commencement of the establishment of the millennial Kingdom of God on earth.

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the spiritual and material abundance that will occur during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ when people will keep God's laws without Satan's deceptions (Revelation 20:1-6). This is in contrast to what is happening now in a world deceived by Satan (Revelation 12:9). Satanic deception, which will be gone then (Revelation 20:1-3), is part of why most who profess Christianity have been misled by 'nice' false ministers as well as why many of those ministers have been misled (2 Corinthians 11:14-15).

Jesus himself, kept the Feast of Tabernacles, and also taught it per John 7:10-26.

Here are some instructions about it from the Hebrew



³³ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁴ "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the Lord. ³⁵ On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it.

⁴¹ You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, (Leviticus 23:33-35,41-42)

¹³ "You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, ... ¹⁴ And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who are within your gates. ¹⁵ Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the Lord your God in the place which the Lord chooses, because the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice.

¹⁶ "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. ¹⁷ Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you. (Deuteronomy 16:13-17)

God had ancient Israel dwell in booths/tabernacles ('sukkos' in Hebrew) in the wilderness for decades before they entered the promised land. Those booths, in a sense, pictured that they were only heirs to the promised land. Even during the Millennium, when the Kingdom of God is ruling over mortal nations, the mortal people will be only heirs to the Kingdom. They must overcome and grow in knowledge and wisdom to inherit the promises.

God says of Ephraim (sometimes portraying a type of all Israel in scripture) that they will “dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the feast” (Hosea 12:9, Douay-Rheims). Israel, in the wilderness, was a type of all people who must go through trials and tribulations to inherit the promises (1 Corinthians 10:11). They were sojourners, waiting to inherit the promises of God.

We Christians are to realize that we have no permanent city in this age and look to the one to come (Hebrews 13:14). The staying in temporary dwellings during the Feast of Tabernacles helps remind us of that. Christians should attend church services, if possible, each day of the Feast of Tabernacles to learn (Deuteronomy 31:10-13; Nehemiah 8:17-18) being living sacrifices, which is our “reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

The Feast of Tabernacles is a time to rejoice (Deuteronomy 14:26; 16:15). The use of the related tithe shows that this is to be a time of abundance (Deuteronomy 14: 22-26), but also that the ministry should be taken care of in this age (Deuteronomy 14:27). The Feast of Tabernacles helps picture the time of millennial abundance. This gives us a glimpse into the time after Jesus returns.

We Christians now await the coming millennium and the change that occurs at the last trumpet (1 Corinthians 15:52), which is also called the first resurrection:

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4).

The Bible show that after Jesus gathers the Church to Himself, and after He is seated on His throne where we will be ruling with Him, He will gather the nations before Him and say to the Christians:

³⁴ Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (Matthew 25:34).

Now, those who keep the Feast of Tabernacles look forward to this as it helps picture the millennial kingdom.

In the early second century, Papias of Hierapolis said:

[T]here will be a period of some thousand years after the resurrection of the dead, and that the kingdom of

Christ will be set up in material form on this very earth.

The observance of the Feast of Tabernacles is a shadow of the coming millennial kingdom of God that faithful Christians have kept since New Testament times.

Where Can it Be Kept?

The Feast of Tabernacles is essentially a “pilgrim-age” (Psalm 84:1-5) period, meaning it usually involves travel outside of one’s normal community. Jesus ‘tabernacled’ with humans when He was here.

While some falsely claim that the Feast of Tabernacles from the past through current times must only be kept in Jerusalem, this is in error. The children of Israel were not even in Jerusalem for centuries after the commands for its observance in Leviticus 23 were recorded—hence Jerusalem was not an initial option for them. The Bible shows the Feast of Tabernacles can be kept in cities other than Jerusalem (Nehemiah 8:15; cf. Deuteronomy 14:23-24). During the second temple period (530 B.C – 70 A.D.), Jews often kept it elsewhere.

It may also be of interest to note Polycarp of Smyrna in the 2nd century and certain others in Asia Minor in the late 4th century kept the Feast of Tabernacles in Asia Minor, not Jerusalem. This is confirmed by sources such as the Catholic saint Jerome and research done by the 20th century Cardinal Jean Danielou.

A nineteenth century anti-millennial scholar named Giovanni Battista Pagani wrote the following about the Egyptian Bishop Nepos of the third century and those who supported the millennium:

...all those who teach a millennium framed according to Jewish ideas, saying that during the millennium, Mosaic law will be restored... These are called Judaical Millenarians, not as being Jews, but as having invented and upheld a millennium according ... The principal authors of this error were Nepos, an African Bishop, against whom St. Dionysius wrote his two books on Promises; and Apollinaris, whom St. Epiphanius confound in his work against heresies.

It should be of interest to note that neither Bishops Nepos nor Apollinaris were Jews, but were condemned for having a religion that had “Jewish” beliefs. And since Apollinaris is called a Catholic saint, it should be clear that the respected non-Jewish Christian leaders in the early third century clearly did hold to ideas that were condemned by the allegorists. The fact that they held to “Mosaic law” is evidence then that they both understood the meaning of and kept the

Feast of Tabernacles, but with a Christian emphasis.

The Greco-Roman bishop & saint Methodius of Olympus in the late 3rd or early 4th century taught that the Feast of Tabernacles was commanded and that it had lessons for Christians:

The Catholic priest and scholar Jerome said that Nazarene Christians kept it and that they believed that it pointed to the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. This keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles by Nazarene Christians in the late fourth century was also confirmed by the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox saint Epiphanius of Salamis.

Records indicate that the Feast of Tabernacles seems to have been kept in Europe during the Middle Ages as well as specifically in Transylvania in the 1500s, at places without palm branches. There is some evidence to suggest that it was kept in the Americas in the 1600 and 1700s. It was kept by the old Radio Church of God and Worldwide Church of God all around the world in the 20th century.

We in the *Continuing Church of God* continue to keep it in places around the world and we also teach that the Feast of Tabernacles points to the millennial reign of Jesus Christ in the kingdom of God.

The Feast of Tabernacles has been observed by many modern Christians in either tents or motel/hotel rooms functioning as “tabernacles” – temporary dwellings – and not just in palm-branch huts that the Jews normally used. The New Testament shows that Christians have a different tabernacle (cf. Hebrews 8:2; 9:11-15), which is consistent with not having to personally build a palm-booth. The Bible shows that the children of Israel dwelt mainly in tents per Exodus 33:8 (and sometimes other apparently temporary, per Deuteronomy 4:45-49, homes) while they were in the wilderness for forty years and that God considered those as “tabernacles” per Leviticus 23:43. Living in tents or motel rooms is a similar type of temporary dwelling/tabernacle today.

The Bible shows Christians need not make animal sacrifices/offerings (Hebrews 9:9) like the burnt offerings which the children of Israel used to provide during the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:36-37). Instead, we are to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, which is our reasonable service (Romans 12:1) – which normally includes regularly attending church services during the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Bible Teaches that the Feast of Tabernacles Will Be Kept in the Millennium and God Will Ultimately ‘Tabernacle’ with Us

Bible prophecy shows that the Feast of Tabernacles will be kept in the millennium:

¹⁶ And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

¹⁷ And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. ¹⁸ If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

¹⁹ This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles (Zechariah 14:16-19).

So the Bible teaches that God will expect all to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the future. Even Catholic commentators recognize that God’s plan includes the Feast of Tabernacles.

The kingdom of God will replace all the kingdoms of this world (Revelation 11:15), and this festival helps picture this by separating (cf. Revelation 18:4; 1 John 2:18-19) Christian pilgrims (1 Peter 2:1-12) from their usual routine. The keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles gives us a glimpse in this age of what will happen in the future millennial kingdom. The Bible also shows that later, “the tabernacle of God” will be on the earth “and He will dwell with” us (Revelation 21:3). Keeping the Feast of Tabernacles now is also a foretaste of things to come.

Dr. Thiel has been interested in the Church of God for over 40 years. He was baptized by a Worldwide Church of God minister in 1977. He writes extensively. He is currently the Overseeing Pastor of the Continuing Church of God, one of the top ten groups (in terms of membership) whose leaders were once part of the old Worldwide Church of God. Hundreds of thousands know him as “COGwriter” as he writes over 1000 news posts and articles per year at www.cogwriter.com.

The Sabbath Day

Terrell Perkins

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy... That's how the fourth of the Ten Commandments begins. Most Christians today believe that the need to obey the Commandments was done away with by the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. What His sacrifice did, in fact, was do away with the penalty for breaking Gods Commandments. (Sin is the transgression of Gods law.) Christ didn't come to do away with the law, He came to fill it to its fullest measure. You shall not murder became more complete when Christ taught that even to hate one's fellow man was a violation of it. You shall not commit adultery became more complete when Christ added to it that even to lust after someone else's spouse violated the commandment. In a like manner, a spiritual dimension was added to the Sabbath commandment. We are not only to cease from our daily labor in it, we are to do good in it; we are to seek to feel the presence of God in it.

The Sabbath Day was made for man, for our good. One cannot argue that the law of God is for our own good and simultaneously argue that we need not observe it anymore. That makes no sense.

The Sabbath serves to remind us that God created the universe and everything in it...including us. The Sabbath foreshadows the 1000 years that Christ will reign on earth when He returns. It reminds us that we can do nothing of ourselves for our own salvation. Salvation is a gift from God. Keeping His commandments is not a salvation issue...it is an issue of Love. God says, "If you love Me...Keep My Commandments".

The Sabbath is a temple in time. It is Holy time. Only God can declare something Holy...set apart for His special purpose. I sometimes wonder what God would have done if, when He told Moses to remove the sandals from his feet near the burning bush because the ground he stood on was holy, Moses had said, "I don't want to take my sandals off here, I'll take them off over there!" (I doubt we would know the name Moses today if that had happened.)

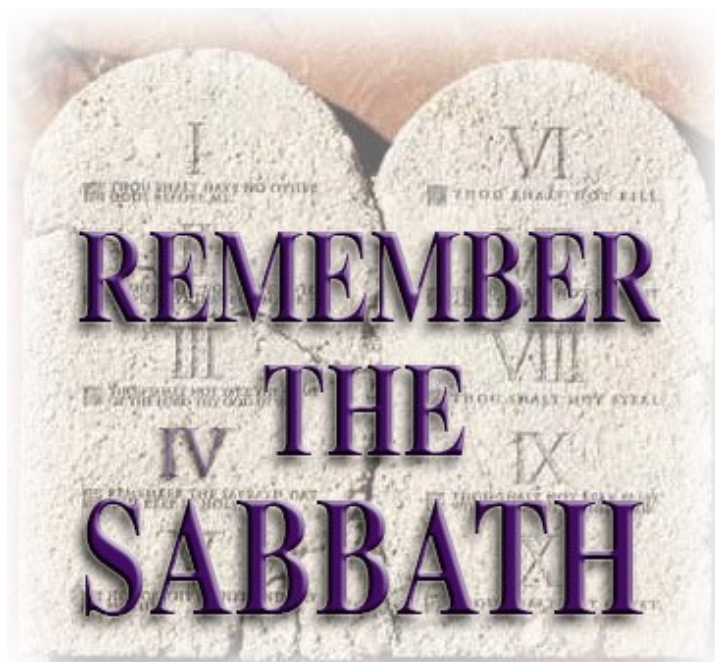
God has declared The Seventh Day Holy. Man has, in effect, said: "We don't want this day Holy, we'll make

tomorrow holy instead!" That's not obeying God. That is choosing for ourselves what is good and what is evil—the same sin Adam made. The traditions of men are never on a par with the Law of God. God is clear many times over in scriptures. He will accept only the worship He commands and none other.

The Sabbath is a gift to us. It's not a work as some would claim. It's just the opposite. It is a time to step out of our daily concerns and allow God to work in us. The Sabbath is new every week, it is a reminder, a guidepost of Gods Way. Keeping it isn't a burden; it's a joy!

Those who see it as an outdated burden only for Jews are missing out on one of Gods great blessings to mankind. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy...it was made for you after all!

Terrell Perkins graduated from Ambassador College in 1981, and has been a Sabbath keeper since. Terrell lives in Capitan, New Mexico, and works as an artist-blacksmith hand forging metal sculpture; architectural hardware; furniture and blades. He has been a freelance writer for over 30 years. Contact him at: Terrell_Perkins@yahoo.com.



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The Camel and the Needle

Lenny Cacchio

Jesus once said that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. That's a hard saying. Did he really mean it? Did he mean that a rich man can never enter the Kingdom, as we all know that a camel cannot pass through the eye of a needle? On the other hand the Bible clearly indicates that many godly men from Abraham on down acquired great wealth.

Many have tried to explain this hard saying of Jesus in various ways, but clearly the disciples seemed to have taken this quite literally because they immediately asked, "Who then can be saved?" (Luke 18:26).

There is a simple explanation for Jesus' statement, one that illustrates an effective teaching method that he used often. Jesus was a master of word pictures and hyperbole. Jesus did this all the time. He warned against straining at a gnat while swallowing a camel (Matthew 23:24). No one took it to mean that the Scribes and Pharisees were swallowing camels.

He talked about taking the speck out of your brother's eye while there is a beam in your own (Matthew 7:3-5). No one took that to mean that people had giant two by fours coming out of their eye sockets. They got the point and understood the lesson.

I would offer that it is the same with that camel and needle thing, even though the disciples did not at first get it. Take a look at the context of this teaching.

A rich man approaches Jesus and asks him what he must do to gain eternal life. Jesus tells him to keep the commandments and names a number of them, significantly naming the last several that deal with how we love our neighbor but omitting those that tell us how to love God. Jesus does not contradict the man when he claims that he had kept those commandments his entire life. But he does tell him that he needs one more thing -- one difficult thing: To sell what he has, give it to the poor, and then follow Jesus.

By this Jesus was showing the man that while he might have done a pretty good job of loving his neighbor (the Commandments that Jesus quoted to him), he was fall-



ing short in his love toward God (the Commandments he did not quote) because he was ranking his wealth before God.

In those days a form of the Wealth and Health Gospel had infected people's thinking. They believed that having great wealth was proof of God's blessing, which would imply that poverty was a result of God's disfavor. Even today many at the preaching of false teachers have fallen for this fallacy, which Jesus' statement to the rich man should surely contradict. That's why the disciples asked Jesus, "If the rich can't be saved, whom God is clearly blessing, then who can be?"

Jesus, of course, said that with us it is impossible, but with God all things are possible, which happens to be a true statement about rich and poor alike.

The point to be made might sound almost heretical. Yes, we accept the Bible as the inspired word of God. But we have to be careful when we take things too literally. We use figures of speech when we talk. We must accept that Jesus did too.

You can read Lenny's latest commentaries on <http://morningcompanion.blogspot.com> and on the BSA Web site at <http://www.biblesabbath.org/>. Lenny is a former member of the BSA board of directors.

Salvation in the Sanctuary

Feast Days...

and the Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Aubrey Duncan

When Adam and Eve first sinned and communion with God was broken in Eden, He introduced His plan for their return to Him (Genesis 3:15). It was a plan that was conceived in the heavenly sanctuary long before the first humans were separated from Him by that baleful thing called sin (Revelation 13:8).

God deeply desires a saving relationship with us, His most cherished creation. Ultimately, that's what the sanctuary and its services are all about, a saving relationship with our Creator and Redeemer.

As we look at the ancient Israeli sanctuary and its feast days, we will discover that they were that plan, in type, and pointed to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and the timeline of His work for our salvation.

Before we get to the feast days, let's take a look at the basic, fundamental function of the earthly sanctuary that God instructed Moses to build. The record reads thus, "And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" (Exodus 25:8,9). This was God's way of telling His people that He wants them to know Him, His work on their behalf, and to have that saving relationship with them. Every component, from the largest curtain to the tiniest piece of furniture of that sanctuary, or tabernacle as it is sometimes called, represented some aspect of the plan of salvation and the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

It was designed to help the children of Israel, and us today, see, experience, and comprehend the workings of God in the heavenly sanctuary in a very practical way. The Psalmist Asaph sums it up this way, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" (Ps 77:13). Here Asaph is simply referring to the manner in which God operates with regard to our salvation from sin, ransom from its penalty, which is death, and ultimate reunion with Him.

Following God's specific instructions, Moses oversaw the construction of a most magnificent and beautiful struc-

ture. It was pitched in the wilderness and travelled with the Israelites throughout their 40+ years of wilderness journey from Sinai to Canaan. Around it was the courtyard enclosed by linen curtains and suspended with silver hooks on brass pillars. The structure itself was 45ft x 15ft and located on the western side of the courtyard which was 150ft x 75ft. It contained two compartments, the Holy and the Most Holy places.

The ancient Israeli sanctuary and its services were an object lesson of God's love, His justice and His mercy. As the people performed the rituals and followed the instructions of the priests, they got a better understanding of who God is and what He required of their lives. As a result, they were shielded from the false concepts of worship that surrounded them, except of course, those who chose to go contrary to God's will as revealed in the sanctuary.

The knowledge of the sanctuary and the lessons it teaches have been largely neglected and forgotten by most of Christendom. In the process, they have deprived themselves of the power the sanctuary offers to live a victorious Christian life. As a direct consequence, they have allowed themselves to be engrossed in and are deceived into accepting a plethora of false doctrines, firmly believing them to be true. In an age when knowledge is increased beyond measure in the secular world, God's professed people are subscribing to an unending array of false Biblical teachings and vain, perverted theologies. It is for this reason that a prayerful study of the sanctuary is vitally important to those who call themselves Christians.

The sanctuary gives the only correct view of God and His dealings with His people. It reveals God's true perspective of sin and His plan for human redemption from it. The sanctuary reveals Jesus Christ, His plan and purpose for the salvation of fallen man. In the sanctuary, all false doctrines are turned upside down and God's truth comes alive in their places with brightness and glory.

The Apostle Paul, in attempting to persuade his fellow Jews that their sanctuary services pointed to Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah, declared, "Now of the things

which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man (Jesus Christ) have somewhat also to offer" (Hebrews 8:1-3). And if Jesus has something to offer then we want to direct our focus to where He is, in the heavenly sanctuary.

M.L. Andreasen, a noted scholar on the subject, writes: "There are professed Christians who do not see much of importance or value in the God-ordained temple services; yet the gospel plan of salvation as revealed in the New Testament is made clearer by an understanding of the Old Testament. In fact, it may confidently be said that he who understands the Levitical system of the Old Testament can much better understand and appreciate the New Testament. The one foreshadows the other and is a type of it" (M.L. Anderssen, *The Sanctuary Service*, pg 20).

Perhaps the most important reason to study and understand the Sanctuary is because Our Savior admonishes us thus: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). Jesus was verily speaking of the revelation of Himself in the ancient sanctuary and its services. The Feast Days, in particular, outlines and gives a clear timeline of the works of Jesus Christ as our Sacrifice, Savior, High Priest and soon-coming King.

When prayerfully studied and understood, it will shelter us from the strong, overwhelming delusions that are rapidly spreading in intensity and scope around the world, particularly in professed Christendom. It is "ONLY" by knowing Jesus Christ and understanding His work in His sanctuary that we will be saved from the delusions of the enemy and what is to shortly come upon the world as an overwhelming surprise.

The Psalmist David declares, "They have seen thy goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary" (Psalm 68:24). God gave it to the ancient Israelites, and to us today, as a means of teaching them who He was and what His plan for their salvation truly entails. So, therefore, the apostle Paul could confidently declare, "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Hebrews 3:16).

Here now are explanations of these feasts days and their

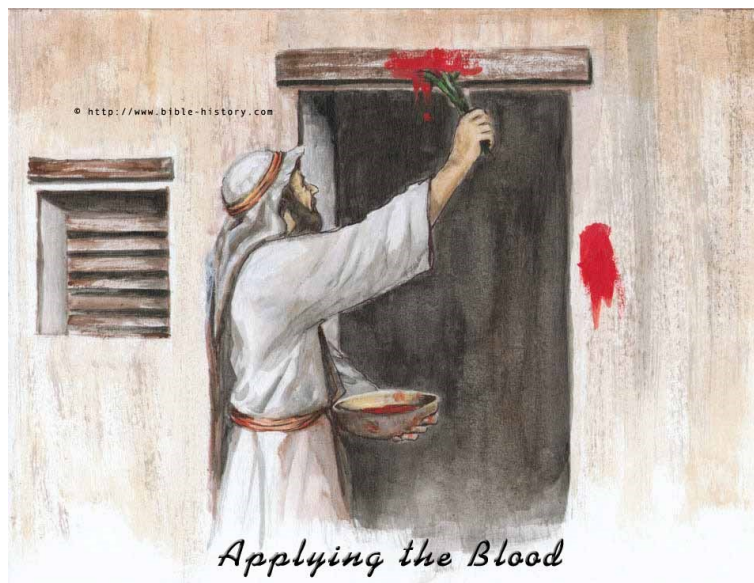
fulfillment in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Passover/Unleavened Bread

"The fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover ... and on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord" (Leviticus 23:5-6)(Exodus 12:5,13).

Fulfillment in Jesus Christ

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump as ye are unleavened. For even



Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (I Corinthians 5:7).

First Fruits

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye come into the land which I give unto you, ye shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest... and ye shall wave the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you" (Leviticus 23:10-11).

Fulfillment in Jesus Christ

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruit of them that slept... But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ at his coming" (1Corinthians 15:20).

Pentecost

"And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: Even



unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord” (Leviticus 23:15, 16).

Fulfillment in Jesus Christ

“And when the day of Pentecost were fully come, they were all with one accord in one place... and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting... and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 1:1, 2, 4).

The gift of the Holy Ghost was given to the disciples by Christ fifty days after his crucifixion. As Jesus was anointed as our High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost.

Luke 23:54-56; 24:1-----3 Days

Acts 1:3-----40 Days

Exodus 29:7,35-----7 Days

Total-----50 Days

Trumpets /Atonement

“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, in the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing trumpets in holy convocation... Also on the tenth day of this seventh month, there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord” (Leviticus 23:24, 27).

Fulfillment in Jesus Christ

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people... saying with a loud voice, “fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made the heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters” (Revelation 14: 6 -7).

NOTE: The call to come back to the worship of the true God, the God of creation, the God of the Sabbath goes out to all humanity today.

Tabernacles/Booths

“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, the fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles (ingathering) for seven days unto the Lord... Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a Sabbath and on the eight day shall be a Sabbath... Ye shall dwell in the booths seven days, all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths” (Leviticus 23:39, 42).

Fulfillment in Jesus Christ

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord... And I saw thrones, and they that sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them which were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received the mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” (1Thessalonians 4:16, 17) (Revelation 20:4) (Revelation 21:1-4).

NOTE: The feast of the Tabernacles/Booths foreshadowed the return of Jesus Christ to earth to gather His elect and to take them to the Kingdom for 1000 years. As the Jews returned to their homes after the feast, so will the people of God return an earth made new, after the thousand years, to the resurrected dead and will spend the ceaseless ages of eternity with Him (Matthew 5:5).

Aubrey Duncan is the author of the book, God’s Sabbath Truth. He is an Elder at the Wimbish Road Seventh-day Adventist church, Macon, Georgia. He may be contacted at: adun-

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WHO IS TAKEN?

Bryant Buck

One of the most popular doctrines in much of modern evangelical Christianity is the doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture. This doctrine teaches that all born-again Christians will be raptured (taken) off to heaven before the start of the Great Tribulation. They will then remain in heaven until they return to earth with Jesus at His second coming. Of course, this doctrine has great appeal since it teaches that all born-again Christians won't have to face the persecution of the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation.

But is this teaching true? No such doctrine existed in the Christian church until the early 1800's. That is, for almost 1800 years there were no Christians who thought that they would be raptured (taken) off to heaven before the start of the Great Tribulation. So what Scriptures do the pre-tribulation rapture proponents take to supposedly validate their theory? One of their favorite passages is found in Luke 17:34-36 (NAS): "I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left. There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left." According to the pre-tribulation rapture proponents, those who are taken are the born-again Christians who are suddenly whisked off to heaven; likewise, those who are left are the unbelievers who are left to face the Antichrist and his minions during the Great Tribulation.

Every passage of Scripture has a larger context. In this case the larger context of Luke 17:34-36 is Luke 17:22-37. (Note: all quotes from Luke 17 are from the New American Standard Version.) The passage commences: "And He said to the disciples, 'The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. They will say to you, "Look there! Look here!" Do not go away, and do not run after them. For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day. But first He must suffer many

WHO IS LEFT?

things and be rejected by this generation.'" (Luke 17:22-25).

Yeshua told His disciples that there would come a time when they would long to see one of the days of the Son of Man and yet they would not see it. If all of the born-again Christians are raptured off to heaven, they would be in the presence of Jesus and seeing one of the days of the Son of man every day. They would only long to see one of His days if they were still here on earth. Moreover, there would be no need for Jesus to warn them that some would say "Jesus is there" while others would say "Jesus is here." Yeshua's warning only has meaning if born-again believers are still on earth where they might be deceived. In fact, Yeshua went on to tell His disciples that when He returns, the event will be like lightning flashing across the sky. In other words, every person on earth will see Christ's return. This truth is in contrast to the pre-tribulation rapture theory which teaches that true believers will be secretly raptured off to heaven before the start of the Great Tribulation.

Continuing in Luke 17, "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so will it be also in the days of the Son of



Man; they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all." (vs. 26-27) So who were taken in Noah's day and who were left? All the unrighteous were taken and destroyed in the flood and the righteous were left. The Bible records: "All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark." (Gen. 7:21-23 NAS) The unbelievers were taken and destroyed; only the believers were left. And nobody was taken off to heaven.

Again continuing in Luke 17, "It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all." (vs. 28-29) So who were taken in Lot's day and who were left? All the wicked residents of Sodom were taken and destroyed with fire and brimstone and righteous Lot and his two daughters were left. The unbelievers were taken and destroyed; only the believers were left. And nobody was taken off to heaven.

Then Jesus declared in Luke 17:30: "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed." Just the same as what? In context, it will be just the same when Jesus returns as it was in Noah's day and as it was in Lot's day. In both cases the unbelievers were taken and destroyed and the believers were left. And nobody was taken off to heaven.

Yeshua then added this warning: "On that day the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out, and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it." (vs. 31-33) As Lot and his family were fleeing from Sodom, the Bible records that "his wife, from behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt." (Gen. 19:26) The picture here is not a picture of believers being raptured off to heaven. Rather, the picture here is one of believers fleeing to escape the judgment of God that was coming upon the unbelievers. The Lord gave Lot and his family warning, but

they were told to flee in haste. Lot's wife looking back was equivalent to the man on the housetop going back into his house. When she looked back seeking to preserve her life, she lost it. So when the Lord gives us the warning to flee, we must be obedient; there will not be time to do anything else.

Finally, we come to the passage often quoted by pre-tribulation rapture proponents in defense of their theory. "I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left. There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left." (vs. 34-36) In context, the unbelieving one in the bed will be taken and destroyed in judgment and the believing one will be left. The unrighteous woman grinding will be taken and destroyed in judgment and the righteous one will be left. The unbelieving man in the field will be taken and destroyed in judgment and the believing one will be left. And nobody will be raptured off to heaven. The false doctrine that the believers here will be raptured off to heaven is totally at odds with everything else that Yeshua says in Luke 17:22-37.

The passage concludes: "And answering they said to Him, 'Where, Lord?' And He said to them, 'Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered.'" (vs. 37) Yeshua's disciples in essence ask Him where the unbelievers will be. Yeshua's answer is clear: the unbelievers will have been killed in judgment and the vultures will be eating their dead bodies. If all the born-again believers are taken off to heaven and the unbelievers remain on earth, there would be nothing for the vultures to eat. But because the wicked are taken and destroyed in judgment, the vultures have a feast. I add that this is the picture also painted in Ezekiel of Yahweh's judgment on Gog: "You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the people who are with you; I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field." (Eze. 39:4 NAS)

When Jesus appears in a flash of lightning, the wicked will be taken in judgment and the righteous will inherit the earth. As Jesus Himself declared, "Blessed are the gentle (the meek), for they shall inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:5 NAS).

Bryant Buck is an elder with Solid Rock Fellowship in Freeport, Illinois. He is the author of two Christian books, The Prayer Warrior and My First Christian ABC Book.

Sabbath Traditions

Lois Lemley

A family tradition passed down through my mother's family (Andrew and Effie Dugger) was Friday night music. The family would gather around the pump organ. Grandma Effie would play the organ while the family sang. An added feature was that one of the lampstands on the organ was a kerosene lamp and on the other lampstand was Little Speck. Little Speck was a tiny bantam hen who heard the music, came in, hopped up on the lampstand and "sang" and danced as the family sang.

When I was growing up we would sing and play our instruments together on Friday nights. Mother (Orabelle Dugger Youngs) would usually play the piano and we, the children, would join in with guitar, violins, accordion, clarinet, cello and flute. With twelve of us in the family we had plenty of voices to sing all four parts.

When we had our own children we also sang and played on Friday nights. David, our oldest, would play the piano and my husband, John, played his clarinet.

It was a nice way to begin the Sabbath, with music to praise the Lord and tell of His wondrous works. Music was a special part of our family.

A tradition passed down from my father's (Victor Youngs) family through my grandmother, Lela Thompson of Fairview, Oklahoma, was salmon soup. We had it often for the Friday night meal when I was a child and also when we had our own family. We've had some other menu options too which we typically reserved for the Friday night meal. A special meal gave a special start to the Sabbath. We also had dessert Friday night and Sabbath - a freshly baked pie or coconut bliss or a milk shake from our frozen berries. In addition, we used our good

dishes.

Having Sabbath lunch with guests is another tradition. The Sabbath is the one day that is uncluttered by demands of the daily grind, allowing us time to spend with friends and family. The fellowship after church continued into the afternoon and often into the evening including Bible study and/or singing together.

We enjoy dressing up on Sabbath even if we can't go to church for some reason. It is just another way for us to set the Sabbath apart from the other days of the week.

The special menu and dishes, Friday night singing and Sabbath afternoon fellowship, music and study of the Bible makes Sabbath special from beginning to end.

Thank you so very much for sharing with your many brethren the ways that your family found to make God's Sabbath a delight for yourself and your family! You certainly make this first generation Christian envious of your background!

This is the first of what we at the BSA hope will be many articles like this where you, our readers, share the ways you made/make the Sabbath Day a blessing to your family and the brethren around you—even to those who are not yet our brethren by calling.

If you would like to share with your brothers and sisters via The Sabbath Sentinel, please feel free to send your story to the Editor at this email address: royce.mitchell@rocketmail.com.

We will try to publish at least one story per edition.

Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.
(Genesis 2:3, NKJV)

Eleventh Edition 2015

Don't Leave home without it!

The Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups (2015 edition) gives locations and contact information for thousands of churches in North America plus these added values:

- ◆ Summaries of 7 classifications of Sabbath-keepers: Baptists, Adventists, Churches of God (and Worldwide successors), Sacred Names, Messianics (Hebrew Roots), and unaffiliated groups.
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70th Anniversary Edition--with Sabbath-keepers pledge relating us to Christ (Messiah) and to one another.

And it's affordable: \$9, plus \$3 shipping costs, or 3 copies for \$25, postage included. Contact us for international shipping prices.



Corrections

The Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups

The Sabbath Sentinel Editorial Staff have created this Department to list changes from the information contained in Bible Sabbath Association's Directory.

If you find a correction is needed, or your information has changed, please let the editor know at royce.mitchell@rocketmail.com and it will get posted here.

Corrections will be highlighted in *bold italic* print.

NEW!

Corrections:

Page 79—True Jesus Church East Bay House of Prayer, 1190 Davis St, San Leandro, CA 94578; www.tjc.org; *Phone number listed is not accurate but matches the TJC.ORG website phone number. Attempts to secure the new phone number are not successful at this point. PLEASE do not call the old number.*

Page 80—Yahshua Lives! Church of God 7th Day, Elder John Johnson, POB 1495, Des Moines, IA, 50305; *Phone: 515-244-8432*; Email: J_E_J1948@yahoo.com.



Letters to the Editor

Just wanted to compliment you on your expanded and visionary efforts. Too, I believe the articles in the magazine have improved.

Having developed a problem in my right eye the past several years, I've become aware of print sizes and other deficiencies. I love your large, well-spaced font size!

However, I believe there's a thing or two you can improve on: Black print on dark-colored background [such as page 4] is problematic. The white print on colored background, such as on page 7, is fine.

Graphic spiffiness is not the point—it's the content and clarity that do the job.

Keep up the good work!

Wade Nanney

Thank you for taking the time to write your words of encouragement. We at the BSA are trying very hard to bring the magazine forward into a more timely publication.

I confess that I could not find the issue that you found on Page 4. I am wondering if we have chosen colors that are problematic to distinguish for those who have problems with color blindness. I need to review how we handle coloring in the magazine. Thank you for bringing this to my attention.

We do rely heavily on the suggestions and compliments that you, our devoted readers, send to us.

—Ed.

I just got my copy of the July / August Sentinel. I love it! Everything from the cover to the clean looking format is beautiful! (I especially like that you put 'From the Blacksmiths Corner' on my piece.) Thanks!

I hope this finds you and your family well and that you find working on the Sentinel rewarding. It is a part of God's Great Work...

Terrell Perkins

Thank you so much for your kind words. I'm honored that you think that what we at the BSA are doing is part of God's work. We certainly would like to think that finding ways to bridge the gaps between the many brethren of different commandment-keeping sects is something that God would want to have done.

Working on the TSS to bring it to a level of sophistication that makes it more attractive to the members, old and new, of the BSA has certainly been rewarding.

—Ed.

I have (a couple of ideas) for the Sentinel. Here they are.

1. Invite the readers to submit their thoughts, testimony, understanding, etc. of a Sabbath passage - such as Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:27... Then select one entry from each decade of age - up to age 10, the 20s, 30s,...'90s. The perspective of different age groups would be wonderful to read.

2. For the scholars among our readership - select a difficult Sabbath scripture, such as Colossians 2:16; Romans 14:5; Galatians 4:10, etc. and invite well thought out, researched responses.

That's it. These ideas could help get more involvement from our readership. May the Lord bless you.

John Lemley

These sound like excellent ideas for departments or articles for future TSS editions. I'd like to join with John in suggesting that if anyone has thoughts about a scripture that you would like to share, or if you would like to address one of the many "difficult" Sabbath scriptures, then we'd like to share them with the readers. Email them to royce.mitchell@rocketmail.com and we'll make every effort to print them .

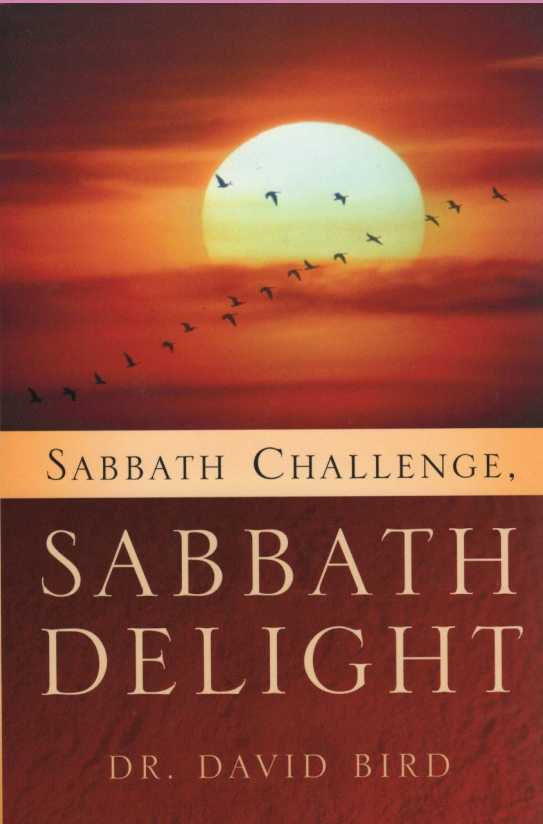
—Ed.

NEW BOOKS!

Sabbath Delight

by Dr. David Bird

B252 \$15 + \$3 shipping, Limited quantities, special offer!



What is the connection between Jesus Christ, the Sabbath and you? This book explores the meaning, significance, and identity of the true Sabbath day. The Sabbath is a divine prescription for family happiness. Choose this book for a relevant, in-depth, and challenging examination of the Sabbath.

Oh No, It's Sabbath Again *

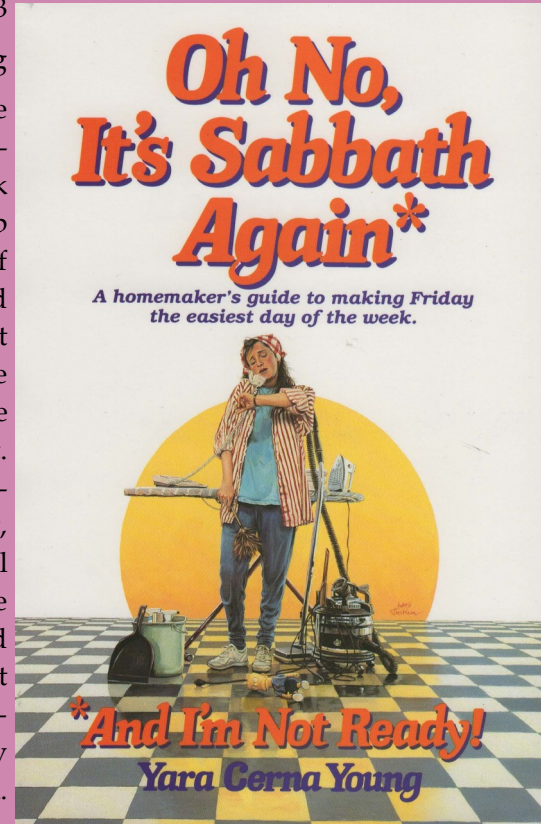
*And I'm Not Ready!

By Yara Young

ITEM B253

\$8 + \$2 shipping

If you're sick of the Friday "beat-the-sun" housework blues, this can help you take control of your home and schedule so that your family and the Sabbath are once more a delight. Young, an Adventist homemaker, offers practical guidelines for home maintenance and organization that actually make Friday the lightest day of the week.



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The Sabbath Sentinel

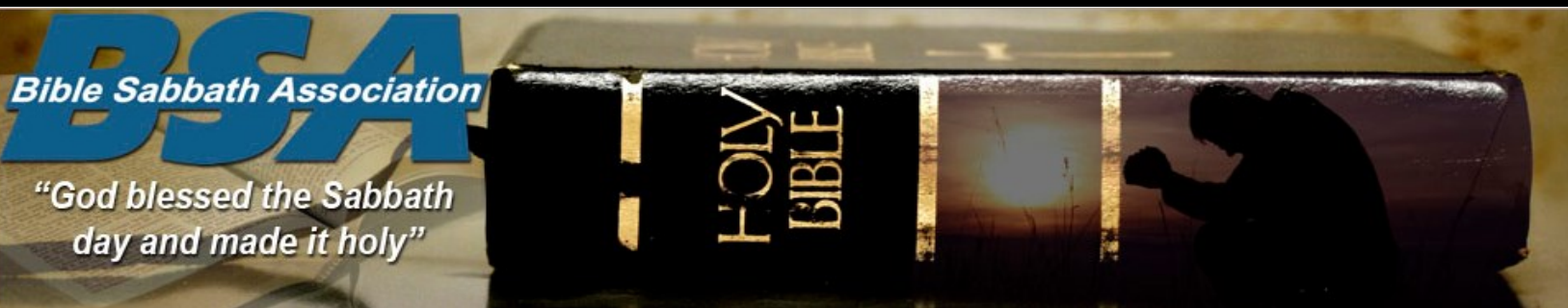
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